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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION: TAIWAN'S UN BID, OLYMPIC TORCH RELAY ISSUE

¶1. Summary: Taiwan's major Chinese-language dailies gave significant coverage September 22-24 to a Supreme Prosecutors' Office decision last Friday to indict DPP Vice President Annette Lu, DPP Chairman Yu Shyi-kun and National Security Council Secretary-General Mark Chen on charges of corruption and forgery in

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connection with their alleged misuse of the special allowance funds. News coverage also focused on the announcement by Taiwan Olympic officials Friday that the Olympic torch will not stop in Taiwan en route to the 2008 Olympic Games in Beijing; on the 2008 presidential election; and on a former Ministry of Justice Investigation Bureau agent, who was arrested Sunday for having allegedly collected information for China.

¶2. In terms of editorials and commentaries, a "Liberty Times" editorial discussed Taiwan's UN bid and urged the Taiwan public to make sustained and redoubled efforts to push the UN referendum. An editorial in the pro-independence, English-language "Taipei Times" commented on the Olympic torch relay issue and said the world will understand China's nature better after this controversy. End summary.

¶3. Taiwan's UN Bid

"Make Sustained and Redoubled Efforts to Push Taiwan's UN Bid"

The pro-independence "Liberty Times" [circulation: 720,000] editorialized (9/22):

"... This year, unlike our previous attempts to 'rejoin' the UN under the name 'Republic of China,' our country has applied to 'join' the UN using the name 'Taiwan.' This move has posed a strong and dazzling challenge to China's illusory One China principle. Such a new approach has also provided an opportunity for countries that are unclear about the cross-Straits situation to have a better understanding of the essence of cross-Straits relations. For these very reasons, China has treated Taiwan's UN bid with great caution; it used every way it can to block Taiwan's application for the UN membership, and it even openly opposed Taiwan's UN referendum via the United States.

"But China's all-out efforts to suppress our country's UN bid have unexpectedly aroused close attention from the international community and media; more countries and international media chose to defend Taiwan against such injustice. One can say that China's apparent or implicit pressure [on Taiwan's UN bid] have provided free publicity for Taiwan. ... Objectively speaking, the current international situation is not favorable for Taiwan's UN bid. But we must not feel discouraged by the setback in our UN bid; instead, we should strengthen our efforts in pushing for the UN bid. ... In order to let the international community hear the distinct voices of Taiwan, this paper urges all the people of Taiwan to endorse the

proposed UN referendum proactively. They should also vote enthusiastically in the referendum next year, and let the world hear the Taiwan people's will to become a member of the UN."

14. Olympic Torch Relay Issue

"Farewell the Torch, Now for Theater"

The pro-independence, English-language "Taipei Times" [circulation: 30,000] editorialized (9/22):

"The failure of Taiwan and China to reach a compromise on the passage of the Olympic torch through Taiwan comes as an anti-climax.

This is because it was a foregone conclusion: The concessions Beijing required -- no displays of offensive national symbols -- were always going to be intolerable, even allowing for the pragmatism that accompanies sporting events. ...

"We look forward to the Games for this reason, and this reason only: Every display of outrage at Chinese brutality, every word of dissent and every humanitarian protest -- by local or foreigner -- will be conflated with hooliganism, separatism, splittism, terrorism and any other "ism" that comes to the mind of Beijing's propaganda squad. The violent results will be a thick smear on the already sleazy record of the IOC and a sober illustration of the profound ugliness of the new Chinese nationalism. And the violence will come as a rude shock for those who persist with the fantasy that China is a benevolent culture whose time for pre-eminence has returned. The slogan "genocide games" and likening Beijing 2008 to Berlin 1936 may strike some as a little theatrical, but this may be because the world has not been given a proper theater to understand China's modern nature. Until now."

YOUNG